

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form (<http://bmjopen.bmj.com/site/about/resources/checklist.pdf>) and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	Sacrifice and Solidarity: A Qualitative Study of Family Experiences of Death and Bereavement in Critical Care Settings During the Pandemic
AUTHORS	Dennis, Brittany; Vanstone, Meredith; Swinton, Marilyn; Brandt Vegas, Daniel; Dionne, Joanna; Cheung, Andrew; Clarke, France; Hoad, Neala; Boyle, Anne; Huynh, Jessica; Toledo, Feli; Soth, Mark; Neville, Thanh; Fiest, Kirsten; Cook, Deborah

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	John Federick C Yap Holy Angel University, School of Nursing and Allied Medical Sciences
REVIEW RETURNED	25-Nov-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	The paper is well written and answers the objectives set by the authors. God bless
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REVIEWER	Liz Lobb University of Technology Sydney, IMPACCT
REVIEW RETURNED	30-Nov-2021

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>Thank you for opportunity to review this excellent manuscript. I have been sent numerous manuscripts to review during the COVID-19 pandemic and this represents one of the best crafted studies I have received.</p> <p>As the authors have indicated many of the earlier studies built a picture of anger, distress and dismay at the public health restrictions imposed on hospital visitation during the pandemic. There were even suggestions of psychological trauma and harm post death for many bereaved relatives. Whilst this may turn out to be the case in longitudinal studies, the findings of this study are indeed reassuring and I would encourage the editor to consider early release to reassure clinicians who are doing their very best under extreme circumstances that they are valued and that families appreciate their efforts.</p> <p>As a qualitative researcher I am always encouraged that our craft will thrive when data is presented and interpreted in such a manner as this manuscript. I did note that the COREQ Guidelines completion sheet was not attached.</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer 1 Comment 1: The paper is well written and answers the objectives set by the authors. God bless

Reviewer 1 Comment 1: We very much appreciate the reviewer Dr. Yap for a thorough review of this work, and the gracious sentiment shared.

Review 2 Comment 1: Thank you for opportunity to review this excellent manuscript. I have been sent numerous manuscripts to review during the COVID-19 pandemic and this represents one of the best crafted studies I have received.

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As a qualitative researcher I am always encouraged that our craft will thrive when data is presented and interpreted in such a manner as this manuscript. I did note that the COREQ Guidelines completion sheet was not attached.

Author Response to Reviewer 2 Comment 1: We are truly touched by Dr. Lobb's comprehensive assessment and positive feedback. We are delighted that this project is considered to be rigorously conducted and of value. We agree that the long term consequences of losing a hospitalized love one during the pandemic will be crucial to understand in longitudinal studies, and we appreciate the acknowledgment of the importance of this work. In this resubmission, We note that BMJ Open accepts any reporting statements and so have included the SRQR reporting checklist for qualitative studies, the Equator Network's number one reporting standard for qualitative research.

We thank the editors and reviewers for their thorough assessment of this manuscript and for the constructive feedback provided. The authors hereby approve the version of the manuscript we are resubmitting, and maintain that this work has not been submitted or reviewed elsewhere. We appreciate your consideration of this manuscript in *BMJ Open*.